

7 June 1986

U.S. URGES ISRAEL TO HELP IN INQUIRY ON ESPIONAGE CASE

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 6 — The United States called on Israel today to provide "full cooperation" in the investigation of the evidence turned over by a former Navy analyst who has admitted spying for Israel.

State Department officials said the repeated demand for cooperation had also been conveyed to the Israelis through diplomatic channels.

The officials said the Israelis had been cautioned that the case of the Navy analyst, Jonathan Jay Pollard, could generate considerable tension in relations if the Israeli Government is perceived to be covering up information.

Charge of Selective Help

Senior Justice and White House officials have said the Israeli Government has not been fully cooperative in the investigation. William H. Webster, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said in an interview Wednesday that Israel had given only "selective cooperation" in the investigation of Mr. Pollard, who pleaded guilty Wednesday to selling secrets to the Israelis. His wife, Anne Henderson Pollard, pleaded guilty on lesser counts.

But Secretary of State George P. Shultz is said by aides to be willing to give the Israelis the benefit of the doubt in the absence of solid evidence that the Government is withholding information.

Four Israelis were named as co-conspirators in the case but were not indicted.

Full Cooperation, Israel Says

The Israeli Embassy said again today that the Israeli Government had provided and was continuing to provide "full cooperation." It also repeated that the Pollard case was "an unauthorized deviation from Israeli policy of not conducting any espionage activities in the United States."

At a news conference in New York today, the Israeli Justice Minister, Yitzhak Modai, characterized the Israeli spying as "most embarrassing to Israel" but essentially "a one-time viola-

tion of Israeli policy."

Speaking at the Israeli Consulate, Mr. Modai said Israeli spying in the United States was "illegal, definitely." He said it was embarrassing because "the United States has always been most helpful to Israel in the area of the exchange of information."

In Israel two weeks ago, the State Department's legal adviser, Abraham D. Sofaer, told the Israelis about the facts that were made public on Wednesday, naming four Israelis as unindicted co-conspirators. He also reportedly repeated the American insistence on cooperation, department officials said.

Mr. Sofaer refused to discuss the matter today. He said he had been denied authorization to speak about the case while it was under investigation.

The criticism of Israel has irked some senior State Department officials whose views usually reflect those of Mr. Shultz. The Secretary of State, who is regarded as one of Israel's strongest supporters, has not commented on the latest developments in the Pollard case. His aides have taken the position that there is no evidence that the Is-

raeli Government failed to cooperate fully.

When asked to comment today on Mr. Webster's assertion that the Israelis were providing only "selective cooperation," Bernard Kalb, the State Department spokesman, said, "I'm not going to get involved with what Judge Webster said."

He added that as a "general response," the United States "would expect full cooperation from the Government of Israel until the case is closed."

Mr. Kalb declined to say whether the United States was receiving such cooperation.

Reports of Peres Anger

The Israeli press reported today that Prime Minister Shimon Peres was upset at statements American reporters attributed to Justice Department officials that were critical of Israel's performance in the Pollard case, and he called in Thomas R. Pickering, the United States Ambassador, to discuss the matter. The State Department would not discuss the meeting.

The main issues of contention reportedly concern differing perceptions of the visit to Israel last December, after the Pollards were arrested, of a joint State-Justice Department team led by Mr. Sofaer. During its visit, the group

received documents and met with Israelis known at the time to have taken part in the spying case.

On Dec. 20, after the visit, the State Department issued a statement saying it was satisfied that the American officials had received "full cooperation" from the Israeli Government.

But Administration officials said that during the talks in Israel, the Americans were not told about many details of the case that became known only when Mr. Pollard, as part of a plea-bargaining arrangement, provided more information.

Name of His 'Handler'

The most important new information was the name of Gen. Aviam Sella of the Israeli Air Force, who was Mr. Pollard's first spy "handler" in 1984. At the time, General Sella was a colonel and was taking graduate courses at New York University.

State Department officials said that, to those skeptical about Israeli Government cooperation, it was inconceivable that Israeli officials had not learned of General Sella's involvement from their own investigation and had not made this known to the American team.

But Mr. Shultz is said to believe that it is quite possible that the Israelis who were running the spy operation had been able to keep General Sella's involvement a secret both from the Israeli Government and the Americans.

Israeli officials reported to the American team that the intelligence operation was a "rogue" operation run by Rafael Eitan, a veteran intelligence official who was a close associate of many leaders of the Likud bloc.

A State Department official said that the United States had asked to speak to General Sella about the case, but that he had not been made available.

Skepticism From Some

Nevertheless, even in the State Department, there are officials who express skepticism about the Israeli Government's actions in the case.

One official, who admits to not being privy to the confidential discussions between the two Governments, said he found it hard to understand how Mr. Eitan, if he had indeed carried out an intelligence mission contrary to Israeli policy, had been given the post of chairman of Israel Chemicals, one of the largest state-owned enterprises.

Mr. Modai said the Israeli espionage operations were designed to get information for Israel only. They did not, he insisted, "constitute any danger to the security of the United States."

One official, who regards American support for Israel in the Middle East as excessive, said he was "amazed" that there had not been more of an outcry in the United States over the case.

Besides, he said, "the military intelligence Israel has turned over" to the United States is "worth more than all the the military assistance the U.S. had provided to Israel."